

The Sweetest Things In Life Are Free

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The Sweetest Things In Life Are Free

by [Stealthlamb1](#)

Summary

"So where are they? I want to watch Mike kick his ass."

"That's just it, Harvey." Louis takes a step back. "Tanner kicked Mike's ass."

"What are you talking about? This case was cut and dry. All Mike had to do was hand over one file and watch Tanner fold like a paper airplane. What kind of mud could Tanner possibly have dug up to go after our client?"

"No Harvey. Literally. Tanner hit Mike."

Notes

This just popped into my head. All mistakes are still mine.
Commenting only encourages me :)

Love to prompt something similar to all the writers out there:
Tanner hits Mike. How does Harvey react. Long, short, angst, fluffy, funny. Love to get more takes on this.

Love you all!

The Sweetest Thing In Life Are Free

Mike not only made fun of the Spinners again he creased the album cover fumbling to slide it back into the bookcase. And really, when is the kid going to learn.

As punishment, Harvey left him behind to re-proof a merger for his four 'o clock meeting instead of joining him for lunch with their Texas oil mogul client, Herman Carlisle, notorious for long, exorbitantly expensive meals and excessive alcohol consumption - a thank you for getting his seventeen year old daughter's record expunged of a shoplifting charge.

He's feeling great, and it has little to do with the top shelf scotch he just finished off that's marinating the most succulent steak he's had in quite awhile that's giving him that extra pleasant buzz. It's the fact that once he gets back to the office he still gets to school Travis Tanner and that's going to be the true icing on the cake.

He waives off the waiter as he checks his watch. "Herman. It's been great, but I'm sorry," Harvey stands, buttoning his suit jacket. "I've got to go."

"Nonsense, Harvey. You haven't had desert yet. I had my assistant call ahead to have the chef prepare three orders of Noka coated Alba truffles. They roll them in 78% pure cocoa powder and sprinkle them with Japanese sea salt. They top them with a pure vanilla sauce flecked with real diamonds. Not on the menu of course," he adds in a whisper. "My wife's suggestion. Apparently she and your associate share a love of chocolate. Think of them as a bonus for going above and beyond in making those shoplifting charges disappear. They would have been an insurmountable stigma on my little Shelia's college application given her grades."

Harvey tries to maintain his air of nonchalance. After all, he is used to excess and overindulgence, but even he's hard pressed to say he's ever partaken in such decadence. "They run me \$30,000 a plate, but my wife insisted. Come now," the older man gestures back to the table as two glasses of port are being set down along with the most artfully displayed waste of money Harvey has ever laid eyes on.

And now he really feels bad that he'd left Mike behind, because while you can't force feed the kid three squares a day he can put away sugary foodstuffs like nobody's business.

"Okay Herman." Harvey sits back down. "But I have to make it quick." He takes a bite of one of the morsels and his eyes roll into the back of his head. "Christ. That's good."

The oil mogul smiles, picking up his glass of port. "While the best things in life may well be free, a golden key can open any door." And though all of my money couldn't make those chargers disappear, here is to being able to afford the only attorneys in New York that could."

Harvey tips his glass once again feeling guilty, as it was Mike that actually got the charges dismissed.

"Harvey!"

The older man rolls his eyes, but continues down the hall at the same determined pace. "Whatever it is I don't have time for it, Louis. I'm late for a deposition."

“With Travis Tanner,” Louis pants, catching up. “I know.”

“If you know,” Harvey continues on, “then why are you still talking to me, Louis?”

“Because the deposition was moved to conference room C.”

“And why wouldn’t you open up with that?” Harvey spins gracefully on his heel heading toward the elevators.

“Harvey, wait!” Louis jogs along side the senior partner, his short legs no match for Harvey’s graceful stride. “It was moved to conference room C, but they’re not there anymore.”

With an exaggerated sigh, Harvey abruptly stops rounding back on on the shorter man sensing Louis is hiding something and doing a piss poor job of it at that. “It can’t be over already. What did you do?”

“I didn’t do anything. Mike took over for you.”

Harvey visibly relaxes. “Good. He’s the one that got the dirt on Tanner’s client in the first place.”

He knows the kid will consider knocking Tanner down a peg or two a reward, even if Harvey didn’t plan to let him handle the deposition in the first place. “He’ll have Tanner on the ropes in no time. So where are they? I want to watch Mike kick his ass.”

“That’s just it, Harvey.” Louis takes a step back. “Tanner kicked Mike’s

ass.”

“What are you talking about? This case was cut and dry. All Mike had to do was hand over one file and watch Tanner fold like a paper airplane. What kind of mud could Tanner possibly have dug up to go after our client?”

“No Harvey. Literally. Tanner hit Mike.”

“What did you just say?” Louis doesn’t remember being grabbed by the lapels or his short trip to the wall, but finds himself pinned there nonetheless, Harvey staring him down, eyes alight with anger.

Louis sighs. “Tanner knew he was beat, but instead of giving in gracefully, he started in on Mike’s parents.”

"That fucker!" Harvey hisses. "I'll fuckin' kill him."

"B-but he wasn't getting anywhere with that," Louis stammers. "So he started in on yours. That's when Mike got agitated, which of course Tanner immediately latched onto..."

Louis looks uncomfortable and Harvey knows this is just the tip of the iceberg. "Louis! Spit it out!"

“Tanner may have insinuated... um, stuff - about the two of you... it all went to hell from there. ”

“Where. Are. They?”

Placing a gentling hand over one of Harvey's fists, Louis squeezes gently. "I helped Donna get Mike to your office once Jessica arrived to deal with Tanner."

"Where Louis!" Harvey shouts, just as a voice calls his name from down the hall.

"Harvey!" Standing stock still, quite a distance away, Harvey can see the worry in his assistant's eyes. "Tanner's in Jessica's office."

Harvey lets go of Louis heading toward the elevator, knowing Donna was giving him an order. Go. Get to him before security does. Hurt him.

He knows Mike has to be hurt; Tanner's a boxer after all. Harvey's taken a few of those right hooks himself and while Tanner's may be a joke in a courtroom, he's no joke in the ring. But if Mike were in real danger, Donna would have told him and it's the only thing that keeps him moving in the opposite direction of his associate.

Sweeping into Jessica's office, with no preamble whatsoever Harvey storms right up to Tanner and swings and doesn't stop swinging until he's bodily pulled away by one of Louis' whipping boys and pushed to the other side of the room.

Lying on the floor Tanner groans, one hand on his head, the other swiping at the blood trickling down his chin. "I guess I deserved that." Tanner prods gently at the new hole in his lip with his tongue.

"You guess?" Harvey roars.

“What can I say, Harv? You raised your boy in your image. I couldn’t resist.” His face is beginning to redden, bleeding in several places.

Harvey lunges forward, landing two more body shots before Jessica is there, getting between them. “Harvey. Enough” She picks the contract up from her desk and holds it out for Harvey to see. “He’s met our price and then some. Let it go,” she says calmly. “I’ve called security.”

“I get it, Harv. Really.” Tanner continues. He knows he’s already lost this round but he can’t help letting Harvey know he’s got himself a hefty bit of leverage to hold over him for their next bout. “He’s cute. A little young, though. I bet he costs a fortune to keep at your beck and call.”

“He’s twice the lawyer you could ever hope to be.” Harvey retorts.

“Defending his honor. Adorable. Too bad I didn’t know you swung that way. Our negotiations could’ve gone a lot differently.” Tanner leers.

“Not really,” Harvey scoffs. “You still would’ve lost.”

“Whatever you say, Harv. Just know, whenever you’re ready to trade in your little boy for a real man, you’ve got my number.”

“Oh, I’ve got your number, all right, Tanner.” Harvey sneers.

Tanner’s baiting Harvey, but Jessica can see the older lawyer doesn’t quite grasp the severity of what he’s done. Had he hit Louis or even

insulted Donna, an escort out of the building and nice hefty settlement award would have probably brought things back to the status quo, but look in Harvey's eyes have gone from sparking anger to black rage. Her fears are confirmed when a very large security guard enters her office and Harvey, without turning around greets him in an eerily calm voice.

"Jimmy. How are the kids?"

"Doing great Mr. Specter," the uniform greets the suave lawyer easily. "Loving the new little league equipment and jerseys you bought them."

"Think nothing of it, Jimmy. It was Mike's suggestion after all." Harvey smiles down at Tanner.

"I heard something about an altercation, sir?"

"Mr. Tanner, here, apparently took exception to something Mike Ross said and hit him during a deposition this afternoon." Harvey says, once again, in a voice way too calm to fit the situation.

It's when all pretense drops from the guard's face that Tanner begins to really understand the type of shit-storm he's just stepped into. "Did he now?" The guard strokes the baton in his waistband. "I would be more than happy to escort him out of the building, for you, Mr. Specter."

"I think that would be great, Jimmy. Thank you." Harvey smiles at Tanner.

“It's my pleasure, Mr. Specter. Believe me,” he adds as he roughly pulls Tanner up from the floor by his arm.

“Thanks Jimmy.”

“Okay, Harv, wait. I admit it. I lost my cool. How much more do you want? Name your price for the settlement and I'll have my client cut the check.”

Harvey doesn't flinch.

“Oh, what?” Tanner whines in disbelief. “Street justice, Harv. Really? Aren't we a little old to be having schoolyard fights?”

“You tell me, Tanner. You're the one that just bullied my guy to get my attention.” He pulls a card out of his inside pocket, writes something down and tosses it toward Tanner. “Now you've got it.”

Tanner bends slowly, one hand holding his ribs, as he picks up the card and reads it. He looks exasperated but nods. “Fine. Just call off your dog.”

“Harvey, what are you-” Jessica begins as the senior partner heads for the door.

“It's taken care of Jessica. Jimmy, just escort him out.”

Tanner looks at the card again, ignoring the perplexed stare from Jessica and the smug grin from the security guard.

“Fuck.”

When Harvey reaches his office he's not surprised to see Mike laid out on his sofa, his head cradled in Donna's lap a cloth pressed to the back of the blond's head. What does surprise him is Louis balancing on the edge of the coffee table, sleeves rolled up to the elbows, and Mike's arm resting on one of Louis' legs.

“What the hell?”

“Harvey!” Both Louis and Donna shush in unison.

“I'm checking him for a concussion.” Louis explains. As Harvey comes around he can see now that Louis has a penlight in his hand and he's studiously flicking it back and forth in quick succession across his associate's field of vision.

“Hey Harvey.” The hand on Louis' knee lifts, and waves clumsily. “Jesus,” the blond groans attempting to swat Louis away. “Vision's blurry enough without you shining that light in my face,” Mike slurs. “Harvey-” Mike tries again, turning a glassy eyed stare toward his mentor. “I really pissed Tanner off.” He sounds proud as his voice trails off into a whisper. “Got him real good.”

“I can see that,” Harvey agrees, trying not to fly off the handle again as his eyes lock on the mark Tanner left on his boy's face.

"All right." Louis sets down the penlight and reaches into the highly organized first aid kit next to him on the table. Pulling out a tube, he puts a dime-sized amount of gel on his finger and dabs it on Mike's cheekbone.

"Ow, Louis. That hurts!" Mike hisses.

"You are definitely concussed. But there doesn't seem to be anything broken. Your cheek is going to bruise, but it doesn't look like you're going to get a black eye. Given you took a direct hit to your cheekbone, you probably did more damage to his hand than he did to your face if it's any consolation."

"See Harvey," Mike smiles then grimaces as the skin pulls across his face. "Ow," he groans again. "I hurt his fist."

"Good job, Rookie," Harvey smiles, amusement beginning to edge out his concern.

"All taken care of?" Donna asks, her hand continuously carding through Mike's hair. She looks up just in time to see Harvey flex his hand, her eyes settling on Harvey's bloodied knuckles.

"That's it?" She asks angrily, pulling the cloth away so Harvey sees the blood on the ice filled towel.

Harvey instantly kneels down not caring how it looks to Louis, turning Mike's head to the side to get a better look. "Don't." Mike pleads. "Dizzy." He warns.

"He hit the conference room table on the way down," Donna explains.

"He's thrown up twice."

Using both hands, Harvey separates the fine blond strands to reveal a large bump and gash still oozing blood. Grabbing the towel, he presses it back against Mike's head. He meets Donna's angry glare. "We have an appointment later," he assures her.

"Where are we going?" Mike tries to get up, but Louis is quicker, placing two hands firmly to Mike's shoulders pressing him back down to Donna's waiting lap.

"I can come, right, Harvey?" Mike grabs Louis by the forearms, presumably to pull himself back up again, but immediately he's distracted. "Shit Louis. Your skin is really soft."

"It's the mudding. I keep telling you to come back with me."

Mike smiles dopily. "Did I ever thank you for that, Louis; the lunch, the mudding? I really liked working with you."

The kid is definitely out of it and with any luck will shortly be down for the count before he says anything else he's going to regret. Nudging Louis aside, Harvey tries to get an arm under Mike's. "Time to go to the hospital, Mike."

"Why? Oh my god, Harvey." Mike grabs his mentor's hand as he attempts to help him upright. "What happened to your hand?"

Thinking quickly, Mike grabs the towel filled with ice from Donna's hand and applies it to Harvey's. "We have to go to the hospital." He stammers, stroking his thumb gently across Harvey's fingers.

Donna bites her lip to quell her laughter as does Louis, while helping the blond off the sofa. "Don't worry Mike. Ray is waiting downstairs."

"Thanks Donna." Mike sways uneasily on his feet.

With Louis on one side and Harvey on the other, the four make their way to the elevators and down to the street without too much trouble.

After Ray helps Mike into the car with Donna, he pulls his driver aside. "I know it's a lot to ask, Ray but would you-"

"Say no more, Harvey. I'll stay with them. Back to your condo when they're done?"

"Uh, no Ray. Donna's. You can go home from there and I'll come collect him later on."

"You've got it Harvey. Don't worry," Ray says watching Harvey stare at the backseat. "He'll be fine." He says before getting in the driver's seat.

Once the car pulls away Louis is left standing awkwardly next to Harvey, watching the other man stare longingly as the car disappears into midtown traffic.

"Why didn't you go with them?" He asks after a minute. "I thought..." He quickly stops himself. That's none of his business, Louis reminds himself.

Harvey turns to Louis and claps him on the shoulder, a shit-eating grin on his face. "Because we're going to the gym."

"We're what?" Louis watches wide-eyed as Harvey hails a cab and climbs inside.

"Are you coming?"

"To the gym? Why are we going to the gym, Harvey? And more importantly, why are you inviting me?" Louis asks, half afraid Harvey is going to pummel him for allowing Mike to get hurt today.

"You want to watch me kick Tanner's ass in the ring, don't you?"

"Me?" Louis' head begins to bob, his smile getting wider and wider as he moves toward the backseat. "Shit yeah!"

"Other side, Louis." Harvey slams the passenger door.

Hustling, Louis runs around to the other side of the car and quickly scrambles in. "Shit yeah!"

Harvey doesn't feel it yet with the adrenalin still coursing through his veins but the few good shots Tanner did land will be making themselves known later.

“That was awesome!” Louis’ high is infectious and Harvey can’t help but smile, even as it pulls at his torn lip. “You owned him!”

Harvey wants to share in Louis’ excitement, because kicking Tanner’s ass was satisfying on so many levels, but he knows he has to address the elephant in the room before they get to Donna’s apartment.

“Louis. About what Tanner said...”

The shorter man quiets instantly, a small smile tickling his lips because regardless of what’s coming he feels closer to Harvey than in all the years they’ve worked together, and hell – watching a dirt ball like Tanner get his ass handed to him was just amazing.

“So.” Louis interrupts, saving Harvey from having to begin. “You and Mike.”

Harvey turns away before speaking. “Yeah. Me and Mike.”

“I figured. I mean I didn’t know before, but the way Mike reacted... It was pretty obvious.”

“Is this going to be a problem?”

Louis shakes his head. “No. No, of course not. Not from me. I assume no one else knows.”

“Except Tanner and half the firm?” Harvey huffs out an incredulous laugh. “The only person we’ve told, well, we didn’t actually tell was-”

“Donna” they both say at the same time.

“So we’re okay?” Harvey asks, feeling a little vulnerable. Not only has he never been open about this aspect of his life, but he’s also admitting that he’s in a relationship; that he cares about Mike above anyone else in his life. And as if that wasn’t bizarre enough, the first person he’s actually confessing to is Louis of all people.

“I mean, I’m still in charge of the associates. Just because he’s your... he’s not going to get any preferential treatment.”

“Wouldn’t expect him to.” Harvey smirks.

"You're lucky to have him." Louis says quietly.

"Yeah. I am." Harvey smiles.

As the silence stretches, and his mind is beginning to settle back down Harvey finally asks the question that’s been niggling on the edges of mind since the day’s events unfolded. “Clear something up for me.” Harvey turns to his long time colleague. “I know what Tanner said to piss Mike off, but what did Mike say to get Tanner so riled?”

Louis smiles. “Just two little words.”

Harvey smiles proudly.

“They were going back and forth with Tanner essentially insinuating Mike was nothing but your boy-toy, when Mike finally stops arguing, pauses, looks Tanner dead in the eye and just laughs, ‘you’re jealous!’ with a big manic grin on his face. That’s when Tanner hit him.”

“Good boy,” Harvey murmurs. “He’s learning to read people.” Harvey nods. “Once he gets that down - shit, you and I are going to be out of a job.”

Louis nods in agreement. After another moment of silence, Louis clears his throat. “So, uh...” Louis looks Harvey dead in the eye. “How does that work, anyway? With you two.”

Harvey shakes his head in exasperation. “Just the way you think it does, Louis. I’m not giving you the birds and birds talk.”

Louis laughs, unable to shake the smile he’s been sporting for the past two hours. “You totally kicked Tanner’s ass.”

“I totally did.” Harvey agrees.

“My God, the inner sanctum. Have you ever been here before?” Louis asks bouncing from foot to foot outside of Donna’s apartment, as Harvey raps lightly on the door.

“Do I look okay?”

“Jesus, Louis, would you calm down?” Harvey rubs his jaw that’s slowly beginning to throb.

The door snaps open and the two men are met by an angry looking Donna. She’s wearing her hair up in a messy bun, flowing silk pajama bottoms, a cotton tank top and a long oversized sweater, and still looking fantastic.

“Would you two keep it down? The poor thing has a headache as it is.” She snaps angrily, stepping aside to let them in.

“How is he?” Harvey doesn’t wait for an answer as he brushes past her taking a knee in front of the sofa. Mike’s asleep, but that doesn’t stop Harvey from whispering ‘hey’ as he presses a gentle kiss to the boy’s forehead.

Behind him, Donna stands stunned looking back and forth between her two boys and Louis. “Oh,” Louis says as if it’s nothing. “I already know.”

“Oh.” She nods, her eyes getting wider. “That’s nice.”

“He totally kicked Tanner’s ass.” At that Donna smiles.

“Good. That’s...” She looks back at Mike and at the way Harvey’s fussing over him. Those blue eyes are open now, but still looking glassy and unfocussed. “That’s good. That fucker deserved it.”

“Donna?” Harvey looks around at the side table, then the coffee table behind him.

"Oh." She walks to the door and pulls a stack of discharge papers from her coat along with a bottle of Tylenol. "Here." She opens the paperwork, looking for one sheet in particular. "Wake him every hour for the next twelve hours and ask him his name, today's date, his birthday... The usual. The doctor did say given his memory, you may want to throw him a curve ball every now and then just to be sure." She hands the papers over to Harvey who shoves it in his pocket. "He can't take a shower until the stitches come out, so sponge baths for the next seven days." She pauses looking uncomfortably at Louis, who just looks at his shoes, his cheeks pinkening slightly. "I already made the appointment for next week."

"Donna, thanks." He gently squeezes his assistant's hand, before helping Mike upright examining the bruise on Mike's beautiful face. "You are not allowed to pick fights without me," Harvey whispers, placing a soft, gentle kiss on Mike's lips. "Understand?"

"He started it." Mike pouts, his eyes drooping, his head leaning heavily into Harvey's embrace.

Behind him, Louis steps up and slips the tube of Arnica gel into Harvey's pocket. Harvey looks down confused and reaches into his pocket before smiling. "Thank you, Louis. For everything."

Louis nods. "You just take care of him. I'll let Jessica know you two won't be in tomorrow and cover anything that comes up."

"Come on, slugger," Harvey grunts as he pulls Mike off the couch. "We've got to get you home."

"Home sounds nice. M'tired."

"I'll bet you are." Harvey nods to Louis and kisses Donna's cheek as he maneuvers his associate out the door. "Make me chocolate chip pancakes?" They can hear Mike ask as they wait for the elevator.

"I have something better," Harvey promises. "Courtesy of Mr. Carlisle."

"You brought me a doggie bag?" Mike gasps. "I thought you said that was tacky?"

Harvey presses his lips to Mike's head amazed at the things he's willing to do for his boy. "Paying \$30,000 for chocolate is tacky. Leaving it for the kitchen staff when it was meant for you, would be downright criminal."

The End

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